

VIII. Panel Travel

A. General Rules

1. The current and previous mileage compensation rates are located in Appendix “D”. Such claims must contain the stated purpose of the travel, the number of miles, and the amount due. The claims must be itemized on the expense worksheet.
 - a. Receipts are required for any and all travel expenses, including daily parking and tolls. Any other expense exceeding \$50 will require a receipt as well.
 - b. Overnight travel must be approved by the presiding judge prior to incurring travel costs.
 - c. Reimbursement for meals may not be claimed, unless you are on overnight travel status or the actual travel time exceeds 10 hours but is less than 24 hours and no overnight stay is required. Meals obtained must be in accord with existing government travel regulations. Alcoholic beverages are not reimbursable.
 - d. Reimbursable travel expenses are confined to expenses considered essential and in connection with counsel’s representation under the CJA and supported by receipts.
 - e. A CJA Panel Attorney traveling on official CJA business must exercise the same care in incurring expenses that a prudent person would exercise in conducting personal business using his or her own money. Excessive costs, circuitous routes, services unnecessary or unjustified in the performance of CJA business are not reimbursed. Mileage and other expenses shall be claimed only for the direct route, unless there is a necessity to travel another route. The most fiscally responsible method of travel must be selected. The attorney should consider the amount of travel time as well as travel fares in making the selection.
 - f. All overnight travel should be arranged using government discount travel rates. Contact the appropriate court’s CJA Clerk’s Office for assistance.
 - g. Attorneys will not be compensated for time spent driving to court to file motions unless it is of an emergency nature and a written explanation is submitted.

- h. Motions should be filed electronically and when necessary to be filed in person, done on an occasion when counsel has to attend court on other business.

B. Procedures for Obtaining Government Discount Travel Rates.

1. A written request for travel authorization must be submitted in advance to the presiding judicial officer
 - a. A written travel authorization must be signed by the judge.
 - b. Contact the CJA Clerk's Office for the applicable *per diem* rate for your destination.
 - c. After the Court has authorized your travel, the order should be presented to the Clerk's office for issuance of a travel authorization form. After submitting this form to the Government's travel agency, your flights will be booked and billed directly to the Court. However, hotels and meals must be covered by counsel and reimbursement sought when the voucher is submitted.
 - d. A service provider who will be traveling with or on behalf of a CJA panel member is also subject to the requirement of obtaining a travel authorization
 - e. When traveling on a District Court matter, application should be made to the presiding judicial officer for an order authorizing the requested travel. Once received, the order should be presented to the District Court Clerk's Office who will issue the travel authorization.
 - f. When traveling on an appellate matter, a motion should be made in the Court of Appeals for authorization to travel. If granted, such travel authorization can be presented to Omega Travel who will charge transportation costs to the government account. If counsel is willing to lay out the transportation costs and seek reimbursement by voucher thereafter, counsel may book transportation by means other than Omega while being mindful to be fiscally responsible in the choice of carrier.
2. After Obtaining the Travel Authorization:
 - a. Call Omega Travel to arrange for tickets and hotel accommodations. The number is 866-450-0401.

- b. Identify yourself as a CJA Panel Attorney (or expert) providing CJA representation.
 - c. Provide Omega Travel with the required information from the travel authorization.
 - d. Instruct Omega Travel where to send the tickets.
- 3. Costs for common carriers are paid directly by the court.
- 4. Hotel costs are claimed for reimbursement on the travel section of the voucher.
- 5. Receipts are required for reimbursement for all travel expenses. Credit Card bills are not sufficient for reimbursement purposes.
- 6. If you arrange your own travel, you will be reimbursed at the contracted government discount rate. Failure to obtain judicial approval for overnight travel may result in your claim for reimbursement being disallowed.